

March 14th, 2023

The Honorable Tina Liebling

Chair, Health Finance & Policy Committee

477 State Office Building

St. Paul, MN 55155

Chair Liebling and Health Finance & Policy Committee Members,

I am the Fire Chief for the City of Albertville, and serve as the President of the Metro Chief Fire Officers Association. Our Association represents Chief Fire Officers, Command Staff Officers, and Public Safety Directors from across the greater Metropolitan area and has over 120 members representing 65 public safety organizations

* The purpose of our Association, from our Constitutional documents, is:
  + To improve the quality of Fire Protection, Emergency Medical Services, and Public Safety.
  + To elevate the standards of fire education and prevention.
  + To promote cooperation with other interested associations, organizations, and governmental agencies.
  + To guard and foster the welfare, professional development, and material interests of its membership.
  + To promote the common good, the community welfare, and the general welfare of the State of Minnesota and its inhabitants by seeking and establishing efficient means of affording fire protection.

It is under these still prevalent principles, that I, on behalf of the Metro Chief Fire Officers Association and our members, am writing to you in support of HF2736.

In February of 2022, the Minnesota Office of the Legislative Auditor (OLA) released a program evaluation that found, in part, the State’s oversight of emergency ambulance services is insufficient and the regulatory board is an ineffective administrator of the services.

In January of 2023, the OLA released an update to the 2022 Evaluation Report stating, in part, “The Legislature should enable local governments to have input on service area boundaries and should restructure how the boundaries are created, modified, and overseen. The Legislature should experiment with pilot programs to address ambulance services’ staffing and revenue challenges. The Legislature should also consider structural changes to EMSRB’s board.”

Our Association agrees with both the findings in the original OLA Evaluation Report and follow-up summary.

Our recommendations regarding Emergency Ambulance Service Reform include:

1. Modify existing Primary Service Areas (PSA’s) to correspond with local governing units (“LGU”) lines.
2. Require performance standards be set during the license renewal process.
3. Quality assurance metrics reviewed over that quarter.
4. Consistent definitions of “response time” and “quality of care”.
5. Require a quarterly report to be delivered to the local units of government with oversight authority of the EMS in that PSA.

Thank you for your discussion, and consideration, of HF 2736.

Respectfully submitted,

